

# AN ANALYSIS OF CROSS-CULTURAL BEHAVIORS FOR MILITARY ADVISORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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## ABSTRACT

Five-hundred-sixty-five externally sourced Transition Team advisors returning from Iraq and Afghanistan completed a survey to help identify the cross-cultural behaviors critical to advisor effectiveness in the current operating environment. Results indicated role modeling, establishing credibility with one's counterpart, and being respectful were among the most frequent and important advisor behaviors. Results also suggested that a command of common words and greetings in the native language was valuable, but that advisors were able to communicate without significant proficiency in the counterpart's language given the availability of competent interpreters.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A recent issue of the *Air Land Sea Bulletin* (e.g., Allardice & Prather, 2008; Nagl & Drohan, 2008) highlights the complexity of the military advisor's role and the importance of advisor effectiveness to American interests abroad and at home. Thus, it is imperative to gain a better understanding of the advisor's roles and responsibilities. In particular, it is vital to understand the behaviors required for effective advisor performance, as these are the behaviors that should be the target of training and selection interventions.

While many anecdotal reports exist regarding the advisor's job experience, a scientific and valid understanding of an advisor's job can be obtained through the use of well-established job analytic techniques. To this end, a post-deployment survey was constructed to help build an empirical understanding of the cross-cultural aspects of the advisor's job. To our knowledge, this is the first survey of this magnitude that collected quantitative information about the cultural and interpersonal behaviors of military advisors.

Although the job of advisor likely requires both tactical proficiency and technical expertise, the post-deployment survey focused on the portion of the advisor's role that is least understood—specifically, interacting with others in the operating environment as part of a reconstruction effort. The post-deployment survey was modeled after a task analysis questionnaire, which is a common approach for analyzing jobs (Williams & Crafts, 1997). The post-deployment survey consisted of 151 behaviors proposed to be demonstrated by advisors while interacting with others in their operating environment. These behaviors were derived from advisor training objectives identified through a workshop with subject matter experts, refined and expanded in subsequent meetings by the research team, and later revised on the basis of data collected from a pilot version of the survey administered to 118 advisors returning from Iraq.

Similar to methodology employed in task analysis questionnaires, advisors were asked to provide two types of ratings for each behavior listed on the survey. First, advisors were asked to indicate how frequently they performed each behavior while deployed. Second, advisors were asked to indicate how important each behavior was to their performance as an advisor. Thus, the survey provided two types of information: how often each behavior was performed and how important each behavior was. The rating scales (Williams & Crafts, 1997) used in the survey are presented in Figure 1.

<u>Frequency Ratings</u>	<u>Importance Ratings</u>
0—Did not perform	0—None
1—A few times	1—Little importance
2—Once a month	2—Some importance
3—Once a week	3—Moderately important
4—Once a day	4—Very important
5—More than once a day	5—Extremely important

Figure 1. Rating anchors for frequency and importance ratings.

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This paper presents descriptive findings from the post-deployment survey in order to provide a general picture of the interpersonal and cross-cultural skills required of a typical advisor. Results from this paper can serve as an empirical foundation for expanding the ideas and concepts explored in the present research, as well as be used by trainers and curriculum designers who must make difficult choices on what to target in their cultural training. Additionally, the results of this paper can be used by advisors preparing to deploy to formulate realistic expectations of what sorts of interpersonal interactions they will encounter once in-country. However, it should be noted that different types of advising missions to different operating environments and countries might require a different demonstration of advisor behaviors.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Sample

Five-hundred-sixty-five advisors completed the survey: 482 Army, 73 Marines, and seven Navy. Of these individuals, 359 reported they were active Army, 97 were Army Reserve, and 69 were Active Marines. Although Army Reserve and Marine advisors had deployed primarily to Iraq, 157 Active Army advisors had deployed to Iraq, while 202 Active Army advisors had deployed to Afghanistan.

The sample consisted of a variety of ranks ranging from E-2 to E-9 and first lieutenant to colonel. Eighty-six percent of the sample consisted of E-6 through E-8 ( $n = 262$ ) and captains and majors ( $n = 224$ ). The sample also consisted of a variety of different positions on the advisor team, including team chief, logistics advisor, operations advisor, intelligence advisor, medic, and staff/maneuver officer. Multiple advisor team types were represented as well, including national police transition teams and military transition teams. Table 1 indicates the number of advisors who could be classified into one of four general advisor team types.

**Table 1**  
**Frequency of Advisors Belonging to Different Team Types**

Team Type	Iraq	Afghanistan
Border	118	15
Military Combat Arms	50	98
Military CSS	25	31
Police	110	37
Not classified	34	40

*Note.* Seven advisors did not indicate their country of deployment and are not included in the table.

### 2.1 Measures

The survey consisted of 151 advisor behaviors; advisors provided both frequency and importance ratings for each behavior. In addition to examining behaviors at the item-level of analysis, similar behaviors were grouped at the scale level of analysis, resulting in 42 scales. Scale values represented the mean ratings across the behaviors comprising the scale. Due to page limitations, only scales having either the highest or lowest ratings are described and reported.

**Use an interpreter.** Ten items focused on the advisor's use of an interpreter (e.g., "Conduct a meeting through an interpreter," "Evaluate the trustworthiness of your interpreter"). Frequency ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .85$ ) scales were reliable.

**Work with unfamiliar interpreter.** One item asked advisors whether they were required to "work with an unfamiliar interpreter."

**Work with unvetted interpreter.** One item asked advisors whether they worked "with an interpreter from the local population who has not been vetted."

**Converse in counterpart's (CP) language.** Six items examined whether advisors conversed about various topics in the host nation's language (e.g., "Talk about tribal issues in your counterpart's language"). These items tapped behaviors representative of skills requiring significant language proficiency. Frequency ( $\alpha = .82$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .87$ ) scales were reliable.

**Speak common words in CP's language.** Two items examined whether advisors used common words and greetings in the host nation language. These behaviors reflect some knowledge of the CP's language, without requiring a sophisticated level of language proficiency to demonstrate. Reliabilities for the frequency and importance scales were .90 and .91, respectively.

**Read and write in CP's language.** Two items asked whether advisors read or wrote in their CP's language. Frequency ( $\alpha = .80$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .90$ ) scales demonstrated acceptable reliabilities.

**Interpret non-verbal behaviors.** Three items assessed the advisor's need to interpret the non-verbal behaviors of individuals from the CP's culture. Frequency and importance scales demonstrated high reliability ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

**Role model.** Four items examined the frequency and importance of role modeling behaviors (e.g., "Exhibiting a strong work ethic," "Serving as a role model for your counterpart"). Frequency ( $\alpha = .83$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .84$ ) scales were reliable.

**Establish credibility.** Two items targeted credibility-building behaviors: “Establish credibility with your counterpart” and “Demonstrate to your counterpart the transition team provides something of value.” Frequency ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .87$ ) scales demonstrated acceptable reliability.

**Consideration and respect.** Six items examined advisor behaviors that involved being considerate and respectful of individuals from the CP’s culture (e.g., “Actively listen to individuals from another culture”). Scale reliabilities for frequency and importance ratings were .85 and .87, respectively.

**Build rapport.** Six items targeted rapport-building behaviors with individuals from the CP culture (e.g., “Gain the trust of individuals from the relevant culture”). Frequency and importance scales were reliable ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

**Compare culture with CP’s culture.** Three items addressed whether advisors examined similarities and differences between their culture and the culture of their CP (e.g., “Capitalize on the similarities between your beliefs, values, and goals and those of your counterpart”). Frequency ( $\alpha = .83$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .86$ ) scales were reliable.

**Understand CP.** Six items assessed whether advisors engaged in behaviors that required understanding their CP’s perspective or point of view (e.g., “Capitalize on your counterpart’s point of view,” “Predict how your counterpart will behave”). The frequency ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .86$ ) scales were reliable.

**Sense manipulation.** One item asked advisors if they needed to “Recognize when individuals from the other culture were trying to manipulate you.”

**Mentor and coach.** Three items examined whether advisors engaged in the general advisory activities of teaching, coaching, and mentoring. Scale reliabilities ranged from .88 (importance) to .91 (frequency).

**Instruct CP without interpreter.** One item asked advisors if they were required to “Instruct a counterpart without the aid of an interpreter.”

**Instruct CP through an interpreter.** Another item asked advisors if they were required to “Instruct a counterpart with the aid of an interpreter.”

**Assess CP unit performance.** Advisors were asked two items about assessing their CP’s unit performance. Frequency ( $\alpha = .93$ ) and importance  $\alpha = .91$ ) scales were reliable.

**Manage CP performance.** Four items examined whether advisors were involved in activities to improve CP performance (e.g., “Follow-up with your counterpart to ensure work has been accomplished,” “Praise your counterpart for good performance”). Scale reliabilities were .84 for both scales.

**Identify training needs.** Two items examined whether advisors identified training needs for their CPs. Scale reliabilities were high ( $\alpha = .97$ ).

**Interact with foreign coalition forces.** Two items examined whether advisors interacted with foreign coalition forces in their operating environment. Frequency ( $\alpha = .77$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .78$ ) scale reliabilities were within acceptable ranges.

**Interact with U.S. coalition forces.** Two items examined whether advisors interacted with U.S. coalition forces. Scale reliabilities were lower for these scales than for other scales in the survey (frequency scale:  $\alpha = .64$ ; importance scale:  $\alpha = .67$ ), although these values are not unusual for a two-item scale.

**Manage information.** Eight items addressed whether advisors dealt with issues regarding sensitive information (e.g., “Disclose sensitive information to a counterpart”). Both frequency ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and importance ( $\alpha = .89$ ) scales were reliable.

**Deal with corruption.** Three items targeted dealing with corruption in the local environment (e.g., “Identify sources of local corruption in the environment”). Both the frequency ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and importance scales ( $\alpha = .84$ ) demonstrated acceptable reliability.

**CP receptivity.** In addition to asking advisors about their behaviors, a 14-item scale ( $\alpha = .89$ ) asked advisors to indicate whether they believed their CPs were receptive to their advice or influence. Items were anchored on a 7-point scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7), and a sample item was “My Host Nation Counterpart accepted and acted on my advice.” This scale was added after the first data collection effort, and was completed by 511 of the advisors in the sample.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 Frequency of Cross-Cultural Advisor Behaviors

Of the 151 advisor behaviors, communicating through an interpreter was, by far, the most frequent advisor behavior ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ). At the scale level of analysis, however, the most frequently occurring set of behaviors were *role modeling* behaviors ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ). Table 2 presents the behaviors (at the scale-

level of analysis) that advisors reported performing once a day to once a week.

**Table 2**  
**Means and Standard Deviations for Classes of Advisor Behavior Performed Daily to Weekly**

Advisor Behavior	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Role Model	3.66	1.05
Establish Credibility	3.63	1.21
Consideration and Respect	3.59	0.98
Instruct CP through Interpreter	3.46	1.41
Speak Common Words in CP Language	3.41	1.71
Interpret Nonverbal Behavior	3.36	1.57
Compare One's Culture with CP Culture	3.34	1.22
Use an Interpreter	3.21	0.99
Sense Manipulation	3.07	1.56
Interact with US Coalition Forces	3.06	1.37
Mentor and Coach	3.04	1.29
Build Rapport	3.03	1.05
Identify Training Needs	3.00	1.34

These results highlight that impression management tactics geared toward influencing CP perceptions, such as role modeling (also known as *exemplification*) and establishing credibility (Ammeter, Douglas, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2002), were recurrent activities performed by advisors. Relationship-building activities, such as being considerate and building rapport, also were frequent behaviors.

The results indicate certain communication capabilities were frequently required for the advisor job—specifically, advisors used common words and greetings in the CP language on a daily to weekly basis and often needed to interpret the nonverbal behaviors of individuals from the CP culture. Other communication skills were used less often. Conducting detailed conversations ( $M = .67$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ) and reading and writing ( $M = .40$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) in the CP's language were the least frequently performed advisor activities. Working with an unfamiliar ( $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) or unvetted ( $M = .70$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ) interpreter also were infrequent activities.

### 3.2 Importance of Cross-Cultural Advisor Behaviors

As with frequency ratings of the 151 behaviors, communicating through an interpreter was rated as the single most important behavior ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = .87$ ). Several of the 151 advisor behaviors received mean importance ratings of 4 or higher, indicating behaviors that were very to extremely important for advisor

effectiveness. These behaviors are listed below in order of decreasing importance ratings:

- Communicate through interpreter
- Evaluate trustworthiness of interpreter
- Establish credibility with CP
- Understand capabilities of interpreter
- Conduct a meeting through interpreter
- Demonstrate a positive attitude
- Demonstrate to CP the transition team provides something of value
- Exhibit a strong work ethic
- Be tactful toward individuals from another culture
- Build close relationship with CP
- Recognize attempts to manipulate advisor
- Behave respectfully within cultural constraints
- Serve as role model for CP
- Demonstrate tolerance toward individuals from another culture
- Instruct CP with aid of interpreter
- Praise CP for good performance
- Communicate to CP the advisor respects him
- Understand background of interpreter
- Understand interpreter's cultural biases
- Actively listen to individuals from another culture
- Follow-up with CP to ensure work is accomplished

Analyses of importance ratings also were conducted at the scale level of analysis. Classes of advisor behavior rated as very important to extremely important included the impression management tactics of establishing credibility ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) and role modeling ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), as well as sensing manipulation ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ), instructing through an interpreter ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ), and demonstrating consideration and respect ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = .92$ ).

Several other behavioral categories fell within the very important to moderately important range (i.e., mean ratings between 3 and 4), and many of those scales included advisory/performance management functions, such as identifying training needs ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ), mentoring and coaching ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ), and assessing ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) and managing ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ) CP performance. Categories of behavior that received importance ratings of 3.5 or higher appear in Table 3.

Consistent with results for frequency ratings, reading and writing ( $M = 1.25$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ) and maintaining a conversation ( $M = 1.46$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ) in the CP language received the lowest importance ratings. Such findings suggest advisors in this sample did not believe a high degree of language proficiency was required to perform advisor functions, but other communication activities, such as interpreting nonverbal behaviors, speaking common words and greetings, and using an interpreter, were important to their effectiveness as advisors.

**Table 3**  
Means and Standard Deviations for Classes of Advisor Behavior Receiving Highest Importance Ratings

Advisor Behavior	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Establish Credibility	4.28	1.02
Sense Manipulation	4.14	1.29
Instruct through an Interpreter	4.12	1.23
Role Model	4.03	1.00
Consideration and Respect	4.00	0.92
Identify Training Needs	3.99	1.25
Mentor and Coach	3.91	1.13
Use an Interpreter	3.86	0.86
Assess CP Unit Performance	3.85	1.32
Manage CP Performance	3.84	1.10
Build Rapport	3.75	0.97
Compare One's Culture with CP Culture	3.75	1.18
Deal with Corruption	3.72	1.34
Establish Goals	3.68	1.07
Interact with US Coalition Forces	3.65	1.29
Interpret Nonverbal Behavior	3.62	1.39
Understand One's CP	3.55	1.08
Speak Common Words in CP Language	3.54	1.59

### 3.3 Relationship Between Advisor Behaviors and Counterpart Receptivity

To the extent that one aspect of an advisor's job is to influence a CP toward desired objectives and courses of action, the willingness of a CP to accept the advisor team and the advice of advisors can be viewed as an indicator of advisor success. In general, results suggest advisors believed their CPs were slightly receptive to advisor influence ( $M = 4.65$ ,  $SD = .93$ ).

Although causal inferences cannot be drawn from correlations, correlations provide an indication of the degree of linear relationship between two variables. A better understanding of the relationships between various advisor behaviors and CP receptivity can then direct future research with respect to identifying factors that might enable an advisor to be more influential and effective. The relationships between different advisor behaviors and CP receptivity are reported in Table 4.

Results indicated that advisors who had CPs who were more receptive also tended to report engaging in more considerate behaviors, rapport building behaviors, actions to establish credibility, and role modeling behaviors. Conversing in the CP language was unrelated to CP receptivity, although the basic language skill of

speaking common words and greetings in the CP language was related to CP receptivity ( $r = .21$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Thus, advisors who used common words and greetings also tended to report that their CPs were more receptive to their advice and counsel.

**Table 4**  
Correlations Between Frequency of Advisor Behaviors and CP Receptivity

Advisor Behavior	CP Receptivity
Build Rapport	.34**
Consideration and Respect	.32**
Establish Credibility	.31**
Role Model	.29**
Establish Goals	.25**
Interpret Nonverbal Behavior	.24**
Compare One's Culture with CP Culture	.23**
Instruct CP with Interpreter	.23**
Manage CP Performance	.22**
Understand CP	.21**
Use Interpreter	.21**
Speak Common Words in CP Language	.21**
Mentor and Coach	.19**
Assess CP Unit Performance	.15**
Identify Training Needs	.12**
Sense Manipulation	-.09*
Deal with Corruption	.09
Interact with Foreign Coalition Forces	.07
Interact with US Coalition Forces	.05
Converse in CP Language	.04
Use Unfamiliar Interpreter	.03
Use Unvetted Interpreter	.00
Read and Write in CP Language	-.00

*Note.* \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

With respect to cultural variables, comparing one's culture with the CP's culture and understanding one's CP were significantly correlated with CP receptivity. Because causal inferences cannot be drawn from correlational analyses, however, it is unclear whether the relationship between these variables is because (a) engaging in such cultural cognitions enhances the relationship between advisor and CP, (b) advisors who can see through the eyes of their CP's culture are more likely to view their CP as more receptive, or (c) some alternative explanation, such as a third variable that influences both reports of cultural cognition and reports of CP receptivity.

### 3.4 Additional Findings on Language

The behaviors consistently reported as rarely demonstrated and of little importance dealt with the use of in-depth language skills (i.e., having detailed conversations with CPs in their native tongue). While in-depth language skills were rarely used, advisors reported speaking common words at a basic level in the CP language was both frequently required and important. Moreover, speaking common words in the host nation's language was correlated with the occurrence of a variety of important advisor behaviors: understanding one's CP ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ), comparing one's culture with the CP's culture ( $r = .45, p < .01$ ), establishing credibility ( $r = .40, p < .01$ ), role modeling ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ), building rapport ( $r = .43, p < .01$ ), showing consideration and respect ( $r = .44, p < .01$ ), and interpreting nonverbal behavior ( $r = .69, p < .01$ ). Conversely, maintaining a conversation in the CP's language had weaker relationships with those same advisor behaviors (see Table 5).

**Table 5**  
**Correlations Between Frequency of Language Behaviors and Other Advisor Behaviors**

Advisor Behaviors	Speak Common Words	Converse in CP Language
Converse in CP Language	.31**	--
Read and Write in CP Language	.12**	.37**
Instruct CP without Interpreter	.15**	.24**
Use Interpreter	.35**	.24**
Instruct CP with Interpreter	.24**	.06
Interpret Nonverbal Behavior	.69**	.26**
Build Rapport	.43**	.27**
Consideration and Respect	.44**	.08*
Establish Credibility	.40**	.13**
Role Model	.37**	.09*
Sense Manipulation	.19**	.08*
Compare Culture with CP Culture	.45**	.17**
Understand CP	.35**	.20**
Establish Goals	.28**	.20**
Manage CP Performance	.26**	.20**
Mentor and Coach	.21**	.16**
Assess CP Unit Performance	.23**	.10*
Identify Training Needs	.21**	.09*

*Note.* \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

Table 5 presents the correlations between speaking common words and greetings, conversing in the CP

language, and other behavioral scales included in the survey. In general, correlations between advisor behaviors and speaking common words were higher than they were between advisor behaviors and conversing in the CP language. Such results suggest improvements in language proficiency beyond the knowledge of common words and phrases would not automatically result in a greater display of desirable interpersonal, cross-cultural, and advisory behaviors. However, results also suggest advisors who know the language will use the language, as indicated by significant correlations between conversing in the CP language with reading and writing in the CP language ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ) and instructing the CP without an interpreter ( $r = .24, p < .01$ ).

### 3.5 Behaviors in Iraq versus Afghanistan

Of the advisor behaviors described in this paper, several differences emerged between advisors who had deployed to Iraq versus those who had deployed to Afghanistan. Table 6 presents differences between advisors in Iraq and Afghanistan with respect to the frequency of their behaviors, while Table 7 presents differences with respect to the importance placed on behaviors. Only those behavioral scales found to be significantly different using independent samples  $t$ -tests are reported.

**Table 6**  
 **$T$ -tests Comparing the Frequency of Behavioral Scales for Advisors Returning from Iraq Versus Afghanistan**

Advisor Behavior	Iraq (M)	Afghan (M)	$t$	$df$
Interact with Foreign Coalition Forces	1.46	2.55	8.29***	551
Interact with US Coalition Forces	3.20	2.84	3.06**	547
Use Interpreter	3.14	3.33	2.17*	533
Work with Unfamiliar Interpreter	1.41	1.81	3.86***	548
Instruct CP through Interpreter	3.30	3.73	3.61***	554
Assess CP Unit Performance	2.72	3.03	2.61**	551
Establish Goals	2.69	2.91	2.33*	552
Identify Training Needs	2.90	3.15	2.17*	552
Deal with Corruption	2.46	2.89	3.30**	546
Role Model	3.55	3.83	3.06**	552

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ . Statistically non-significant findings are excluded from Table.

**Table 7**  
**T-tests Comparing the Importance of Behavioral Scales for**  
**Advisors Returning from Iraq Versus Afghanistan**

Advisor Behavior	Iraq (M)	Afghan (M)	t	df
Interact with Foreign Coalition Forces	2.27	3.21	6.48***	546
Interact with US Coalition Forces	3.79	3.45	3.02**	550
Work with Unfamiliar Interpreter	2.77	3.10	2.31*	549
Speak Common Words in CP Language	3.70	3.30	2.94**	547
Interpret Nonverbal Behavior	3.72	3.47	2.15*	554

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ . Statistically non-significant findings are excluded from Table.

Several things should be noted from these findings. In general, differences between advisors returning from Iraq versus Afghanistan are relatively small. Nevertheless, some statistically significant differences between advisor groups do exist. Specifically, advisors returning from Afghanistan were more likely to interact with foreign coalition forces than advisors from Iraq, who were more likely to interact with coalition forces from the United States. This finding suggests advisors in Afghanistan may have an extra layer of cultural complexity in their mission because they not only interact with the host nation culture, but with other cultures from around the world.

Findings also suggest differences in language and interpreter issues. Advisors returning from Afghanistan were more likely to use an interpreter (in general) and unfamiliar interpreters (specifically) than were advisors returning from Iraq. Conversely, advisors returning from Iraq reported certain communication behaviors as more important than advisors returning from Afghanistan. Iraq advisors reported speaking common words in the CP language and the interpretation of nonverbal behaviors as more important than advisors returning from Afghanistan, perhaps because of less reliance on an interpreter.

Unfortunately, the team types represented in the Afghanistan and Iraq samples were not equivalent (see Table 1), and differences observed between country of deployment could be attributable to the different missions and operating conditions engaged in by teams. However, such differences are worth noting because they have implications for the generalization of results to other advisor samples and other advisor missions. If differences

are noted between Middle Eastern countries with a relatively similar mission (e.g., build a professional police and military force), such differences potentially could be magnified for very different regions (e.g., Latin America, Asia) or very different missions (e.g., help train a country's military force to deal with a natural disaster).

#### 4. DISCUSSION

This research presents an empirical investigation of the interpersonal and cross-cultural behaviors displayed by advisors as they interacted with their CPs and others in their respective operating environments. The findings of this research have implications for the development and prioritization of training content, and also may aid in providing a starting point for developing selection interventions. However, it is important to note this survey targeted the "softer" knowledge, skills, and abilities of advisors and did not focus on the technical and tactical expertise that is a crucial part of advisor success. Additionally, differences in advisor behavior were not analyzed with respect to different operating environments. Thus, these results provide a general snapshot of behaviors demonstrated by the advisors in this sample, and differences in behavior might be expected depending on differences in the mission requirements of any given operating environment or country.

A recent report indicated the need for more research to examine the necessity of language proficiency in different Army Military Operating Specialties (MOS) (Abbe, 2008). While the job of advisor is not currently an MOS, the results of the present research indicated the majority of advisors in this sample did not engage in behaviors requiring a great degree of language proficiency, nor did advisors rate such language behaviors as important to principle communications. These ratings might be different had advisors not had access to competent interpreters. However, even given the availability of interpreters, advisors emphasized it was important to use common words and greetings, which require substantively less language proficiency and are related to expressing respect and building relationships.

Depending on how realistic it is for advisors to learn a second language in the amount of training time allotted to prepare advisor teams to deploy, the findings of this research suggest that helping advisors to develop skills in proper usage of interpreters may compensate for deficiencies in language fluency. A 1994 report from the Government Accounting Office indicated that training to Level II language proficiency in a Category III language (e.g., Pushto) typically lasted 47 weeks, while training to a Category IV language (e.g., Arabic) typically lasted 47-63 weeks. This may be unfeasible for most advisor training programs given operational and staffing



demands. The findings of the current research suggest it may be sufficient for advisors to have knowledge of basic words and common phrases rather than achieve Level II language proficiency if skilled and trusted interpreters are available.

Additionally, the advisors in this research indicated using an interpreter was common and important, but reliance on an unfamiliar or unvetted interpreter was infrequent. Thus, training on how to use an interpreter should focus primarily on training advisors to use the interpreters they will come to know well and interact with often. Such training should go beyond using the interpreter simply for translation, and teach advisors how to evaluate the trustworthiness of their interpreter, prepare interpreters for meetings, and assess their interpreter's capabilities.

Another important, but often overlooked, element of communication is nonverbal behavior. Advisors reported that interpreting nonverbal behavior was a frequently used and important skill. Thus, advisor training should focus on assisting advisors in decoding the nonverbal behavior of other cultures. Such training also might target skills that enable advisors to detect when they were being manipulated, since some of these cues might be apparent in the nonverbal behavior of individuals.

Several behaviors requiring interpersonal skills were rated as both frequently displayed and important to advisor success. Specifically, the impression management skills of establishing credibility and role modeling (Ammeter et al., 2002) were viewed as essential advisor behaviors. Relationship building activities, such as rapport building and being considerate, also were viewed as critical, mirroring what others have noted as important advisor skill sets (e.g., Ryan, 2008). Consequently, training and selection interventions for the advisor role should include an interpersonal skills component.

Several advisory/performance management functions were noted as being frequent and/or important (e.g., mentoring and coaching, establishing goals). Thus, it appears advisors should be trained in how to train and advised in how to advise. While the military services currently develop their leaders to train the leaders under them, the advising environment is somewhat different in that CPs are not within the advisor's chain of command and CPs understand the world through a different cultural perspective. The findings of this study suggest the cross-cultural behaviors of understanding the similarities and differences of a CP, as well as understanding the CP's point of view, are an excellent start.

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